

# Among Men Who Work with Hand or Brain

## How to Open a Grocery Store; Right Start Means Everything.

By R. F. HAEGELIN.

Those who do not know the ins and outs of the grocery business the statement that there are not enough first class retail stores in this city may be a revelation. Such, however, is the case.

Right now the trade can support more retail stores than are in operation, because I believe the population is growing much more rapidly than the number of stores.

Knowing this, if a young man were to come to me for my candid advice as to the best means to employ in opening his own store, I should tell him to stay right here and not go to the country. His chances of success would be far better.

I would urge upon him, of course, the necessity for locating in a well settled district where, if possible, he could have three square blocks on either side of his store to draw from. If he did this he could, if he were of the right sort and knew his business, get all the trade he could take care of.

In such a location he would command a good transient and neighborhood trade—two things most vital in the upbuilding of any retail establishment.

### Seek Expert Advice.

The main drawback to the advancement of any young man who desires to become his own boss in the grocery business is that he does not consult with persons who are in a position to advise him what is best to do.

They open their stores, in many cases, absolutely regardless of location or neighborhood conditions, and the result is their business does not flourish as it should.

The new proprietor should first see the sales manager of a reputable wholesale house, the man who, above all others, perhaps, has the interest of the prospective retailer at heart. His own interests are so closely allied with those of the new merchant that he will go far out of his way to guide the young man and caution him against the pitfalls that he should steer clear of.

A good start in the retail grocery business, like in every other line of trade means everything.

The young man first should get in touch with a wholesale house, one that handles a branded stock of goods for which there always is demand. When he has decided upon who his wholesaler will be, he should get in communication with the credit manager, show his references, and establish a line of credit. This accomplished, the sales manager and the salesman with whom he does business after he once has started will take care of the rest.

### Much Depends on Neighborhood.

The size and quality of the initial stock would depend wholly upon the neighborhood in which he opens his store. Ordinarily a stock of groceries representing an outlay of \$1000, or even less, might be ample. This could be increased or diminished in certain varieties of stock as soon as the new merchant has felt out his trade and got a line on what was and was not in demand.

It would not take long before he ascertained the general trend of his trade, and he should, therefore, buy most conservatively at the outset. On his purchases he could, with satisfactory results, arrange terms of from thirty to sixty days. On some commodities, such as tea, for instance, he could have four months, but, if able, he should take advantage of all discounts for by so doing he can save enough to defray his expenses on a good summer vacation.

An important feature he should consider is getting and keeping good help. A competent clerk, for example, can fill more orders

In an hour than the one who does not know the same could fill in half a day.

He should not buy too many items—that is, he should not be too quick in stocking up with a lot of new novelties and items that may not move off his shelves. Many articles come on the market that are purely speculative. Items that the wholesaler knows little more about how they are going to take than does the retailer.

### Keep Operating Expenses Down.

The beginner should be exceedingly careful to keep his operating expenses down to the lowest possible minimum. I cannot lay too much stress on this feature of the business. High rent should be avoided, he should have no more clerks at the start than he absolutely needs, and the number of his horses and wagons for delivery purposes should not be more than his business warrants. He should get none of these things before he actually needs them, for they make a bad showing on the credit side of the ledger.

His fixtures should not cost him more than 20 per cent of his working capital. Second hand fixtures are desirable if they are clean and in good condition. The new merchant can make some profitable trades in second hand fixtures if he hides his time.

The young man should ever be on the alert in building up his business. He should not overlook anything that will bring a customer into his store, and that customer, once enrolled, should not be permitted for any reason to depart. He should meet his trade personally and never overlook an opportunity for getting acquainted. One customer, given personal attention, begins additional customers. He should adopt a liberal policy in exchanging goods and in replacing damaged orders with new goods. If he can possibly do it, personal solicitation will prove one of the best trade builders ever conceived.

### Questionable Accounts Costly.

His deliveries should be prompt, and he should make no promises that he cannot fulfill. When a housewife has ordered her groceries and expects them at a certain hour in order that she may begin the preparation of a meal she should not be disappointed. The order should be at her back door at the time it is promised.

Of course, the good customers of any neighborhood, are hard to get. The new merchant will find that the "undesirables" of his particular community will swarm in upon him, but the right business methods will bring the desirable ones.

In opening accounts he should use the utmost care and discretion in extending credit to those who apply for it. Nothing in the world rate up profits faster than a book filled with questionable accounts. His mercantile agency will prove invaluable in giving him a line on his customers, and he should avail himself of every opportunity for learning who is and who is not entitled to take goods out of his store without paying cash for them.

These personal applications should be given to all transactions. The proprietor of a retail grocery store cannot afford to take too many chances. Like every other pursuit, that of conducting a retail grocery store entails exceedingly hard work on the part of the proprietor. He should work harder than anybody else connected with his establishment, for on his efforts the success of the enterprise depends.

With the right location, the right goods, the right class of trade, and conservation of operating expenses the new merchant should make a living, and a good one.

## Made a Sideshow of Washday; Business Picked Up Right Away.

By WILLIAM B. MAYER.

THERE is one drummer who has a scheme which stands out in a class by itself for uniqueness. He sells washing machines, and "ship on approval" to the dealers. The firm tried the cross examination process to find out why I wanted it, but as I felt that they might not approve of my cup I gave them no satisfaction, and as the price of conversation over the wires was 20 cents per, they soon overcame their inquisitiveness and sent the machine.

His plan is not to merely exercise his unctuous, suave tongue on the dealers, but on the actual customers, who are the housewives. In this instance, themselves.

"I wired to the house," he said, "as soon as I hit on this plan, to ship a washing machine out to me. I had been selling by illustrations and 'ship on approval' to the dealers. The firm tried the cross examination process to find out why I wanted it, but as I felt that they might not approve of my cup I gave them no satisfaction, and as the price of conversation over the wires was 20 cents per, they soon overcame their inquisitiveness and sent the machine.

"On its arrival I proceeded to get busy. Hiring the best looking wagon from the town. I drove around with the machine in the wagon on exhibition. Then I asked one housewife's permission to wash her soiled clothes on a certain designated day. I have yet to find the woman who objects to having her linens washed gratis. This woman was no exception.

### Ad Arouses Curiosity.

"Then I inserted a quarter page ad in the local paper. This is the way it read: 'Mrs. John J. Jackson I have forgotten her real name! will have her washing done by the So and So Washing Machine company on Wednesday, the 15th. The wash will be hung in the back yard on exhibition. Visitors are cordially invited. Refreshments will be served.'

"You can easily conjecture the excitement and laughter that this ad stirred up.

"Wednesday dawned bright and warm, an ideal day for my enterprise. I had ordered a goodly quantity of cookies from the grocer and these, with pink circus lemonade, constituted the refreshments.

"The washing was finished in five time. While I was going through the various operations with my machine I put up a spiel similar to one that I had heard handed out by an auctioneer selling tin razors. Of course, I changed a few parts to meet my special requirements.

"Soon the washing was flapping listlessly under the puffs of a warm breeze. They dried beautifully, as deliciously white as full blown lilies. Of course, I was not exactly idle during the resulting hours. To the contrary, I was literally talking my head off, for I was determined to make a big sale, to emphatically and conclusively prove the success of my scheme—that is, if it was destined to be successful.

"The hours swiftly passed with my more serious arguments intermingled with good natured joking. Those who came early did not leave, as it was an ideal opportunity for gossiping, and the crowd grew larger as each hour passed. In the evening the men came around to see 'what was keeping' the wimmin folks.' They received cigars of a kind which did not perceptibly swell my expense account.

### Side Show in the Evening.

"I impressed upon the male members of the gathering the necessity of their wives owning one of the washing machines, and told them that their local dealer could supply their demands on reasonably short notice.

"When it became quite dark I asked one of the lanky gapping lads if he had a magic lantern. He said he had. At my request and a small compensation he ran to his home and returned with it in a few minutes.

"Using the washing machine for a stand and a large bed sheet on the line for a screen, I showed them the collection of colored slides and finished the performance by a little shadowgraph work in front of the spot light, at which I had been clever when a young man. Then, after the grotesque shadow pictures and lost their novelty I gave a serious talk on the merits of my machine and then gently suggested that we adjourn.

"As they departed in various directions for their homes, unanimously speaking of the good time they had had, and also of 'that great washing machine,' I felt confident that I had conceived a successful scheme. And so it proved.

"The dealer received orders for two machines, if I remember rightly, before the end of that week.

"It goes without saying that I repeat this plan at each town that I come to; that is, if the dealer is backward about buying. It is typical, old fashioned salesmanship, but what of that? It goes. That's all that's necessary."

The fundamental underlying principles of success are simple honesty, ruggedness of character, frugality, and assiduous application to hard work.

C. H. Wacker.

## Complaint Job Needs Diplomat; Good One Has Chance to Rise.

By DONALD SCOTT.

"THE man I have been looking for," said the department store general manager, as he observed a young man in the house furnishings department cordially meet an irate, middle aged woman, listen patiently to her complaint, then ask her one or two questions earnestly and pleasantly although the woman's attack was anything but pleasant to meet.

Then with a show of genuine respect and contagious pleasantness the young man escorted the woman to the elevator and asked the elevator man to let her off at the next floor, where the complaint department was located.

"The woman was in comparatively good humor when she remade her complaint to the professional adjuster. But she was soon 'hopping mad' again, because the adjuster showed just a little unwillingness to listen patiently until she had completed a detailed statement of her complaint. And her rising anger visibly aroused the ire of the complaint man.

Now this woman positively knew that she had just cause for complaint and when she saw that the complaint man intended apparently to fight her, she fairly boiled over with righteous indignation, refused to listen to him, and demanded a hearing from a man higher in authority.

"All right, madam," said the complaint man, with a yawn and a drawing emphasis on the "all."

At this point the general manager, who had followed the woman and had, unobserved, watched proceedings at the complaint desk, stepped up as though he had then happened along. Of course, he noticed the wrath of the woman and stopped, much to the complaint man's embarrassment.

"Would you not like to have Mr. Ford, the man who just directed you down here straighten out this matter for you?" the manager asked, after he had listened to her story.

"Yes, that's good. He understands," was the reply.

### Now Heads Complaint Bureau.

This incident happened just about three years ago. The following week from that time Ford was transferred to this complaint man's job, with a third increase in salary. Today he is chief of the complaint bureau in this store, and is slated for a good executive job as one of the general manager's important assistants in the operating end of the business.

The thoroughness with which he adjusted complaints in all departments and of every kind has fitted him with the necessary detailed knowledge of the workings of all departments—the knowledge necessary to fill the executive job just ahead that will eventually pay him more than double the salary he now draws.

That is one of the most important advantages of experience in the complaint department; it makes a man familiar with the mistakes that ought to be avoided.

There is plenty of room in any organization for the man who knows how to keep his firm out of trouble with customers, and to know the troubles to look out for is half the battle.

Few know the shortcomings of the service end of the average business, whether it is professional, manufacturing, wholesale, or retail, better than the man who has been through the grilling received from general experience in the complaint department.

As a stepping stone to better things the complaint department is good.

A good complaint man must have developed diplomacy in his direct dealing with people at their worst either in person or by letter—that rare kind of diplomacy that is skilled in keeping the good will of some one in the face of obstacles.

### Must Be Courteous and Shrewd.

Asked what he thought to be the most necessary requisites in order to make a success of adjusting complaints, the young man already mentioned said: "A natural born

blend of courtesy and shrewdness; also a sense of absolute fairness and justice—which usually is the result of the right kind of home training.

"To begin with, I had no more than the usual amount of courtesy in my makeup," he continued. "I had to develop it; also shrewdness, so that I could tell in a minute usually whether the complaint was just or not. No doubt I let chronic and artistic complainers get the best of me many a time when I first started into this interesting game. But just a good, strong effort at plain, ordinary courtesy pulled me through so that at least I did not lose trade for the store."

"Later I learned to pick out unceremoniously the just from the unjust complainers. I worked on the principle that the complaint is in the right until he proves himself to be in the wrong. Therefore I always listened patiently to the whole story—that is, of course, where the complaints were out of the ordinary, involving a considerable sum of money—watching all the time for discrepancies and exaggerations.

"Often the unjust complainer really does imagine that his complaint is just. That one thought tends to make the good complaint man patient with all cases whether or not he knows the complainant to be in error."

Then, asked what in his opinion was the most important policy in the adjustment of complaints, he replied: "The best way to settle a complaint is not to have any."

### Tracing Causes Important.

"That is the complaint man's biggest job," he said. "He can earn a mint of money for his firm by getting at the fundamental causes of complaints and often by suggesting direct remedies for those causes. Tracing causes is often no snap, but it is important."

"I worked three weeks on a series of similar complaints of the nondelivery of goods in a suburb. In several cases I traced the goods to the door of the complainant. Then in several cases we found that the complainant was not at home part or all the time on the day of delivery."

"That was my cue. I found that invariably that had been the case. A house detective found that the delivery boy was in the habit of leaving packages in the back entry way of certain houses where he made frequent deliveries, and that a thief had followed up the season, just to take advantage of these deliveries. The cause, as in a majority of cases, easily suggested the remedy."

"You see, it is the complaint man's task to try to work himself out of a job. And the manner in which he is able to cut down the volume of complaints by getting at the cause and helping to remedy the cause largely determines his value. The more time he has to loaf the better he has done his work."

"This also reminds me of the reason why we just a couple of years ago scattered our complaint department around in various parts of the store and back in out of the way places, instead of having one central place for all complaints. A big, well developed complaint department is not a good recommendation for any store or business."

### Needs Wide Knowledge of Details.

"Even though I shall have a better position as soon as we can find the right man for my present job," continued this young man, "I should have considered work as an expert complaint man of sufficient importance and promise to make of it a life time job. That is one reason why I have been successful. I realize the importance of my work."

"The complaint man doesn't have to look for trouble, but he does have to look for causes and for ways and means of eliminating them. That is his big job. It involves a deep knowledge of the detail workings of a business. That is experience the good complaint man must have."

"Add to this the necessary courtesy, patience, shrewdness, and judicial sense of fairness and you have no mean set of qualifications, should you aspire to be the 'trouble man' in a business."

## Envy Never Gets You Anything.

By JOHN A. HOWLAND.

IT is a common supposition, especially among those inhabiting Fairviewville, that the boss is an ogre to be avoided as much as possible and to be upbraided to one's fellow workers at the slightest provocation.

For example, on walking through a department store during the rush shopping days when the establishments remained open evenings, I heard one clerk grumble to another and I listened to his tale of woe.

"Get! Ain't this awful!" he growled. "Got to work till 10 o'clock and it's always near 11 before we get things covered up, and then we don't get nothin' extra for it. Old Blank goes home in his green limousine with the gold piping, and flowers inside, and all that junk, at 5 every night, and when we're just getting started he goes home for an hour or more, or if he chooses, he can go out and soak up Martini and watch the cabaret."

Does this clerk ever pause to think that the person coming in for this opprobrious censure, once had to work evenings, too; that his position was gained, not by envying the man higher up, but by putting his nose to the grind stone? Does he realize that, though he is working overtime, and not being paid accordingly, a time follows, just as sure as night follows day, after the advent of Christmas, of paralyzing dullness when the clerk's daily sales will scarcely exceed his actual salary? And also of the Saturday afternoons off in the sultry summer, besides the two weeks' vacation at full pay? He doesn't take these things into consideration. Then there is the other class of clerk who

thinks the boss is a downright miser because he doesn't raise his salary; not for working overtime in this instance, but for having greater ability than he is paid for; that he is doing everything for the boss and the boss ungratefully reciprocates by doing nothing for him.

Does this clerk realize that his position is in jeopardy daily by having some one with equal ability offer to do the same work for less money? Does he ever pause to think the cold, salient fact that the boss is allowing him to keep his position when he might have it equally well filled for less money?

Supposing that some clerks are underpaid; if they were to be raised, who would profit? They would, and they only; and the clerk is not the one to be considered in this endless commercial war that is waged daily. It would compel the owner to place a higher price on his goods to overcome this additional expense, and the customers would not stand for this. It is only natural that they will buy goods from the firm which makes the most alluring proposition. With a higher pay roll, that firm is immediately placed at a disadvantage.

So don't forget, Mr. Employe, if you feel that you are underpaid, that if that few dollars' raise which you desire were given to all the other equally deserving employes, it would swell into vast proportions. What is more, perhaps you don't deserve the raise, and it is only a strain of egotism that makes you imagine you are getting the worst of the deal. And if you are deserving, remember that everything comes to be who wants. And, above all, don't forget, too, to go easy on the boss.

## Fired Because He Was Disliked; Grouch Finds It Good Lesson.

By HENRY DICKERSON.

"I WAS the most efficient man they ever had on the job over there," says a young man who one year before had been fired from the job of which he speaks, "yet they fired me and the reason was because none of the other employees seemed to like me, and the reason the other employees did not like me and took so many opportunities to show it was simply because I was ill natured."

"When I left that position," he continued, "my boss in a good, frank way told me just why he was letting me go. He told me that I was on the job all the time and that my work was all that could be desired, but that my personal influence on the other employees was not a good thing for the organization in general. He pleasantly advised me to cheer up."

"Strange to say, I did not get angry at the way he talked. I made up my mind I would try out the 'cheer up' policy in my next job; and I want to say that there are not two bigger words in the language than those."

"I came into this job I now hold determined to be good natured at any cost, and no matter what might happen."

"Within a month everybody in the organization was a friend of mine, although I did not allow myself to get familiar with any."

"I just plugged along in the same old careful way, only I refused to let things bother me. I just kept on working all the time and during that same first month I also gained a reputation as being a man of great self-control."

"I was actually looked up to in a friendly way, and that's the real reason why I got up where I am in the short span of one year. Yes, sir, chronic good nature was the biggest factor that helped me to make good in a big way. Now I have the good nature habit, and it's no effort at all."

### Peppery at the Phone.

Just then this young man's telephone bell rang. He reached over, and in pleasant tones gave some orders to the man at the other end of the wire; then, turning back to me, he said:

"Take the telephone, for example. In the old job it used to make me sore when the telephone rang, and I would shoot into it my displeasure; the man at the other end usually would shoot back at me, and we would both put up the receiver with a bang—then, as a rule, I would use a minute or two to figure out how to avoid letting that fellow slip one over me, for nearly every man in that organization was always trying to throw the books into me. At least I suspected they were and a man generally gets what he is looking for."

"Of course, I don't say any man ought to be an easy mark. I believe in being on the lookout for 'number one' all the time, but it can be done much more effectively if in a good natured way. Even when a man has a kick coming, I believe it should be registered with a 'not possible' good nature."

"Remember the first month on this job. I wanted some change in the routine put through, so that some of the unimportant details I was handling could be taken care of by a subordinate. My boss refused point blank; said the question had been up with my predecessor—then turned to his own work as though that were the end of the matter. I was tempted to go away carrying a grudge against the man who had employed me. Then I cheered up."

### Knew Business, but Not Patrons; Why His Ads Lacked the Pull.

By IRWIN ELLIS.

"WHAT! Let that man go!" asked the manufacturer of the campaign director in an advertising agency. "Why I never talked with a man that knew so much about the manufacturing end of my business. He knew my plant from top to bottom and seemed to know its history, too. Sometimes I thought he knew more about the details of my business than I did."

"That's just it," replied the director. "That was what ailed him. He knew too much. Yours is not the only plant by any means that had an intimate place in his almost limitless knowledge. Yes, he did know a lot more than any other man that ever worked here. He was fairly intoxicated with knowledge—but he didn't know how to use it."

"You see, he made the big mistake of thinking that knowledge consisted of the history of material things. He wanted to be an advertising copy writer, the worst way, so he went to work to learn all he could about factories and processes and businesses in general, figuring, no doubt, that 'knowledge is power.'"

"But, like many another young man who is an exceptionally good student according to schoolroom standards, he got firmly rooted into him back in school the habit of thoroughly studying words and history and material things in a minute, scientific way. So firmly rooted became the habit that he kept on studying the world outside the classroom the same as he had studied the science of physics, for instance, inside."

"Now you and I know well enough that the best study for a business career is the one you don't, and even on the college curriculum. Of course I refer to the great

"I sat down and waited patiently a long time, all the time thinking how I could make him see the thing my way, and all the while I grew more good humored about it."

"Well, the boss kept me waiting there fully ten minutes without so much as looking up at me, although I noticed that his face grew a bit red as he found it harder and harder to concentrate on his work and forget that I was waiting."

"Finally he looked up, and apparently was ready to fight, but noting the expression of good nature on my face he smiled, leaned back in his chair, and invited me to state my reasons. I did so in the best of good humor—therefore to the best advantage—and got what I wanted."

"Good Nature Got Him Everything." Since then I have plain unadorned good nature has got for me nearly every other thing that I have wanted in the business here, including two substantial increases in salary.

"The first time I struck for more pay the boss refused me coldly and said that it wasn't customary to give any man a salary increase after he had been with them so short a time as I."

"I went away resolved to follow up that personal attack with a series of good natured follow up letters. You see, my work then as now was mail sales, and I was then getting good results. Every time I landed a good big order I used the fact as the basis for a follow up letter to the boss."

"In my first letter I told him frankly that I intended to follow him up from time to time until he should realize that I was worth at least \$10 a week more than he was then paying me."

Anyway, this was a good way of calling to his attention the results I was getting. Then at the end of the month I prepared a special summary of results of the month's work and fired it at him as a broadside. Early in the next month, seeing that I was going to repeat, the boss hung up a flag of truce. He gave me half the increase I had asked for, but I was not satisfied and let him know it, though in such a good humored way that he could not have taken offense had he wanted to."

"I showed him that I was thankful to get the \$5 increase, then I began to show him that he should have made it \$10—and the next month he did."

"My next increase came without asking. I want to tell you that 'cheer up' are two of the biggest words in the language. At least, when it comes to getting more money out of the boss, good natured requests and persistence make him humored threats walk the plank every time."

Then, as a sequel to this little story, this young man told how his boss was so much impressed with the value of good nature that he had planned a month of concentration on the subject for all the employees in his concern, for it is a plan in this business for all of us to concentrate on some one particular thing each month.

"Nearly everybody in the place that was inclined to be pessimistic before that month got the 'cheer up' habit then, and the result of that concentration subject have been the best of any this far," says this young man, who blames his cordial smile for his success.

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study of human nature, of people as they think and act and feel, not in historical times, but today.

"I think the schools ought to give a course in human nature. They couldn't teach much of real human nature in the course, but they could introduce certain practical phases of psychology as applied to business, and, greatest of all, they could teach the importance of a knowledge of men and could inject the habit of studying human nature as it sticks out at us all the time in other people."

"Young Lawrence, though he was chock full of facts, didn't know life and couldn't see things through the eyes of the man or woman he wanted to influence."

"He could analyze anything and you couldn't trip him on logic in a year, but cold logic makes few sales. But when it comes to a food product like yours, you've pretty nearly got to know the influence of the stomach over the mind rather than the exact percentage of starch and fats and so on in the food itself. Those facts are not at all convincing when placed alongside another food where a big, happy, wholesome cook serves a steaming mess to some hungry, healthy individual with eager anticipation of a good time written all over his countenance."

"Just one good human interest picture like that, I tell you, will do more to make people want a certain food than a whole book of facts, judged by results, even though you could get them to read all the facts."

"The manufacturer went away convinced that his advertising would be taken care of to better advantage by a man who knew less about his plant and more about the people whose money supported the enterprise."

## Products of Inventors' Genius.

A framework for supporting electric lamps